

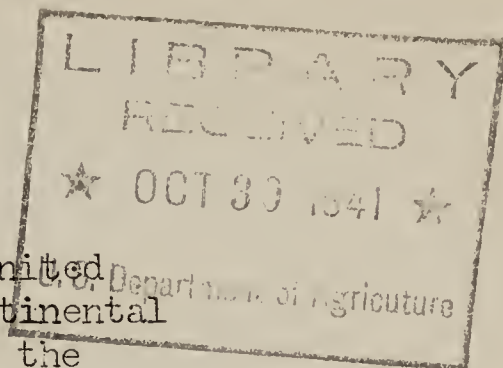
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FORESTRY IN THE NATION'S DEFENSE



Address by E. W. Loveridge, Assistant Chief, United States Forest Service, before the Fiftieth Continental Congress of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, Constitution Hall, Washington, D. C., April 16, 1941.

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The things I want to talk to you about today have to do with the future. But before we look into the years ahead, I want to mention something in the past--a milestone in forest history. I thought about it as I listened to Mrs. Warthen describe the success of the nation-wide tree planting project you chose as one of the ways to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of your Society.

The first National Forest in the United States was established by President Benjamin Harrison in March 1891, almost exactly fifty years ago to the day. Five months earlier, President Harrison's wife, Caroline Scott Harrison, helped to found your Society, and became its first President General.

So the Forest Service not only shares a golden anniversary with the Daughters of the American Revolution, but an anniversary that stems from the same source. Surely it would give President Harrison deep satisfaction to know that the Society founded by his wife is today helping in many ways to safeguard the great system of National Forests which he founded when he established the first Timberland Reserve in Wyoming fifty years ago.

Mrs. Warthen reports that 36 States and the District of



Columbia participated in your Golden Jubilee Planting Project--the Penny Pine Project. For this work, you raised the sizable sum of \$15,000 and planted some five million young trees.

You raised that money yourselves. You carried out the planting arrangements. Those things in themselves were big jobs. But they are only a small part of the real accomplishment. You have created a capital investment that has the power to renew itself for all time, if given the chance.

I like to think of the children of the future who will rest beneath your trees, read the messages on your enduring bronze markers, and take away a real lesson in conservation. Every mother knows that it is never too soon to begin teaching a child the things he should know to make him a good citizen. I hope that none of you will ever lose an opportunity to take children with you when you visit your forests.

Every citizen interested in conserving his country's natural resources owes a debt to your leaders for conceiving this patriotic forest project, and to the members of your Society for the outstanding support they have given it.

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If I did what I would most like to do this morning, I would show you pictures of the natural beauty of the National Forests--alpine lakes, purple mountain peaks 12 to 14 thousand feet high; magnificent Douglas-firs and pines centuries old, and wildflowers of every hue. Even though in the course of my regular duties I probably get into the great forested sections





much more frequently than you do, I still am thrilled and uplifted by the scenic wonders and natural beauties of our land. We of the Forest Service necessarily must be practical foresters, but there is a strong emotional streak, I believe, in all of us.

It is of these things--of the beauties and wonders and rich potentialities of our forest country--that I would prefer to talk to you in ordinary times. But these are not ordinary times. Our mounting desire these days is to look things squarely in the face.

Productive forests are indispensable for both military defense needs and for the social and economic needs of our people. I think that is generally appreciated and understood. The defense needs are strikingly evident today. As you came to this Congress doubtless many of you saw along the way new army training centers undergoing rapid expansion, every one of them calling for lumber and other forest products in enormous quantities. We think of modern ships in terms of steel, but even steel ships require miles of wood planking for decks. Battleships of some types require as much as half a million board feet of lumber. Timber in large amounts goes into wharves and docks. Right now, there is a big demand for spruce in the manufacture of airplanes--for wing spars, and plywood for the covering of fuselages and wings in training planes. Some of you may have seen recent news stories describing an experimental airplane made almost entirely of wood and wood plastics. Indications are that such uses of wood will increase.





Literally thousands of other examples of the use of wood in connection with military defense activities could be cited, but I am sure you all realize the importance of forest products in the defense picture.

Likewise, I doubt if it is necessary to remind you of the innumerable uses of wood and of the value of forests in our day to day needs and in the economic life and defense of our Nation. You can see it everywhere--in your own home, in your daily newspaper (paper is a forest product, you know, and so is rayon, and many other products you might not think of as coming from trees). Even our water supplies, upon which life itself depends, are, in a sense, a forest product, coming from forest watersheds, the protection of which is one of our major problems. However, I do want to say this: that forest lands in this country feed primary and secondary manufacturing plants that represent investments of some three billion dollars; that about thirteen million people receive their livelihood directly from work provided by forest industries; and that directly and indirectly, this forest land contributes to the maintenance of our schools, churches, hospitals, and other important social structures in both rural and urban communities.

With that very brief background, I want to get on with the main theme of this discussion:

As stated a moment ago, the first great surge in the history of forest conservation in this country began some fifty years ago. It followed an awakening of public opinion when



public spirited individuals and organizations came to realize that forest devastation had proceeded from New England to New York, through the great white pine stands of my home state-- Pennsylvania, and on into the Lake States, leaving--well, I do not need to tell you what a scene was left behind it. The resulting wave of public protest was responded to by President Harrison and in succeeding years by President Cleveland, and outstandingly by Theodore Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot, and others. It brought about the establishment of our national forests. This first great surge of forest conservation reached its peak in the first decade of this century. It resulted in a national forest system that has now reached a total of 175 million acres; that's equivalent to almost one acre in every ten in the continental United States.

Do you know that each of you, and every other citizen of this country, owns 1-1/3 acres of National Forest land?

The type of forestry practice developed by the Forest Service of the United States Department of Agriculture in administering these national forest lands is one which I believe you and other citizens, as the owners of this property, can well be proud of. It is studied by foresters from other countries throughout the world.

The entire national forest area is under the closest protection against fire, so that the watersheds of numerous streams are protected against floods and erosion, and the many resources of the land are protected for future wealth-producing use.



Millions of board feet of timber are harvested every year as the trees become mature, and the harvesting is done in such a way that more trees keep on growing and the beauty of the forest is not destroyed. In other words, our foresters have shown that through scientific forestry, you can eat your cake and have it too.

The timber harvesting and many other uses of the national forests provide thousands of workers with income-producing jobs. Twelve million head of livestock graze under permit on selected portions of the national forests. They contribute to our meat, wool, and leather supplies, and to the income of thousands of small ranchers all over the western states. The grazing is scientifically managed so that the growth of forest and grass cover is maintained and improved. Under the care and protection of the foresters, wildlife populations in the national forests have greatly increased, and, as many of you know through personal experience, the national forests provide opportunity for health and pleasure-giving recreation for millions of people. Right here, to all of you who have not yet had an opportunity to visit these publicly-owned--your own--properties, I wish to extend on behalf of the United States Forest Service a cordial and urgent invitation to come to them and see what a wonderful heritage is being provided for your children and mine and the generations to come.

Another result of the first great public protest against devastation of our forests was the launching of a vigorous program







of scientific research in forestry. We now have thirteen regional forest experiment stations, and a Forest Products Laboratory. This Laboratory is the world's greatest institution for scientific research on the utilization of wood. At all of these stations, new discoveries are constantly being made regarding the best ways to handle our forests and the wood products grown within them.

A great amount of research still remains to be done, and our national forest properties are by no means yet in an ideal position, but these developments I have just described were long steps forward in the conservation movement.

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The establishment of the national forests and the outstanding progress made in protecting and managing them brought a subsiding in the flood of protests that had led to their creation by President Harrison and succeeding Presidents. It even lulled many foresters--(I am ashamed to say this)--into a feeling of complacency and smugness. Apparently overlooked, except by a few far-sighted individuals still crying in what was left of the wilderness, was the fact that this fine progress was being made only on the national forests and other publicly-owned lands; that devastation was continuing on an enormous scale on the much greater area of forested land in this country which is in private ownership. Thus the first great wave in forest conservation passed.

Today we are coming to what I believe is a second forward



surge in the conservation movement--we are awakening to the fact that forest devastation continues practically unchecked in the bulk of the timbered sections of this country. And once again public opinion is beginning to call for corrective action.

Let me sketch this picture very briefly. Of every three acres of land in the United States, one acre is forest land. Seventy-five percent of this forest land is in private ownership. And these privately owned lands include in the main our most productive forest lands. From them come 95 percent of our lumber and other wood products.

Is it not obvious, then, that the most overwhelmingly important sector of forest lands in this country today are the privately-owned lands?

What is the present condition of this vast area?

I think that perhaps the best way to present this situation to you is to tell you about the findings of the Joint Committee on Forestry which within the past month has made a report to Congress. This report is based on a study which it has carried on for almost three years. As many of you know, this Committee was appointed in 1938, following a special message from our very forest conservation minded President to the Congress. Its purpose was to study the Nation's forest problem and to suggest definite remedial action.

Five Senators and five Representatives made up the Committee. Senator Bankhead of Alabama was chairman, and Congressman Fulmer of South Carolina, vice chairman. Other members were



Senator Smith of South Carolina, Senator McNary of Oregon, Senator Clark of Idaho, and Senator Bulow of South Dakota. On the House side were Congressman Doxey of Mississippi; Congressman Pierce of Oregon; Congressman Reed of New York; and Congressman Englebright of California.

The Committee wanted to get all the facts. These facts covered a wide range of interests. So hearings were held in every section of the United States. The Committee heard from the general public through representatives of conservation agencies, men's civic organizations, women's organizations, wildlife groups, and other organizations representing true lovers of the outdoors. The Committee likewise heard representatives of forest and allied industries, particularly small operators; of industrial and farm owners of forest land; of labor; of water conservation districts; and of community and State governments.

Hearings were also held here in Washington so as to obtain a full analysis of the forest situation from Federal agencies and national organizations having forest responsibilities. The report calls special attention to the testimony of Vice President Henry A. Wallace, at that time Secretary of Agriculture, and Dr. Earle H. Clapp, Acting Chief of the United States Forest Service.

The report of the Committee and its recommendations represent the most comprehensive treatment that has ever been given this important subject by any Congressional study or investigation. In view of the nature of its findings and recommenda-







tions, it is significant, I think, that the report was unanimous, not a single member filing a dissenting statement.

With regard to the situation in this country as it stands today, the Committee stated, as I noted a moment ago, that the Nation's major forest problem is on lands in private ownership. It pointed out--and I wish to make this point very clear--that some timber holding and logging companies are handling their forests in an excellent manner. Warm approval and praise is due these broad-minded and public spirited individuals and companies. However, the report declared that the number of such well handled holdings and operations is exceedingly small; that with few exceptions the general practice in this country has been destructive exploitation of forest resources without effort to maintain the forest lands in productive condition. The Committee said that 77 million acres, an area twice the size of New England, is now practically non-productive--a wasted no-man's land. And a much larger area is producing only a fraction of what it could and should.

One finding of the Committee sounded a hopeful note. "From the forest resource standpoint," the report said, "America is in transition from a philosophy of exploitation to one of planning and applying sustained-yield management and orderly utilization." Sustained-yield management is the foresters' term for what I said was eating your cake and having it too. It is the bedrock of perpetuating forest resources.

Local economic and social structures built upon exploitation



necessarily collapse when forests are exhausted. Unemployment follows and the farmer loses markets for his products. Merchandising, professions and trades, railroad traffic and revenue all receive setbacks.

The Committee used the term "pitiful" in describing conditions to be found in certain sections of the South. It further stated that illustrations of the social evils which follow destructive logging are to be found in the cutover regions of the Lake States, the Missouri Ozarks, large sections of the Appalachian Mountains, and in other sections where idle forest land has meant abandonment of towns and farms, decreasing population, and heavy relief expenditures. The processes which lead to these conditions are still going forward in the Pacific Northwest and elsewhere.

I'd like to take each section of the United States and give you a case in point as described in the report of the Joint Committee. But I have time for only one.

In the northern Lake States, there is a cutover area of 57 million acres--an area more than 11 times the size of the State of New Jersey. The population is about 1-1/2 million. In 1890, this area produced about 35 percent of the Nation's total supply of lumber. Today it produces about 4 percent. The ruthless destruction which prevailed there has caused industries to close down and move on. Those that have remained must bring in wood for their plants from other sections of the country. Unemployment is widespread.





This is the picture in just one section of the United States. In different forms, the Committee found the same general story in nearly every other forest region in this country--the story of forest areas that should have continued to be, and still could be, assets, which should help to produce forever all the forest products we can possibly use with a surplus for export, but which, under existing conditions, are liabilities.

To correct such conditions, the Joint Committee made sixteen specific recommendations. They included increased planting on idle lands; provision for credits or loans to operators who practice sound forestry; aid in the development of cooperative associations of farm woodland owners; more adequate protection against fire, insects, and disease; and an enlarged program of scientific research. The Committee also recommended substantial increases in the area of National Forests and other publicly-owned forest lands. Many conservationists are convinced that in no other way will much of our forest area be adequately taken care of and properly used.

But the Committee's most striking proposal is included in its Recommendation No. 1: a recommendation for public (government) regulation of timber cutting and certain other forestry practices on all commercial forest lands; a measure designed to stop destructive forest exploitation and to insure that forest lands shall be maintained in reasonably productive condition.

This proposal for public regulation--although unanimously recommended by a large committee made up of important members





of both major political parties--will doubtless be vigorously protested by some of the private interests whose devastating methods of handling their forested lands would thereby be stopped. However, many owners have expressed not only a willingness but a deep desire to handle their forests properly, if they can be assured that their competitors will do likewise. In any event, the overwhelming need for forest regulation will have to be recognized and appreciated by many public spirited individuals and organizations before it will become the "law of the land"--the law of the forest land.

I believe it will be recognized. I believe we are on the verge of a second great forward surge that will carry us to a new peak in forest conservation.

To help attain this very important objective, I would like to make two suggestions. First, that if you have any doubt as to the need, you look at forests as the foresters and other conservationists do, as you go through forested lands on your trips about the country. Your observations can be made in almost any forested section, and with the same results--in the once heavily forested valleys of the Susquehanna, the Allegheny, the Tennessee, the Ohio, and more distant watershed courses. Or up through the New England hills; or through the miles of barren lands in Louisiana; or through the Lake States on your way to a summer vacation spot; or in the cutover timberlands of the great West. By looking at these areas as a conservationist, rather than as a casual observer, and doubtless many



of you have already learned to do so, you will see startling things. You will look through the cover of green that usually comes in quickly on the hillsides after logging and fire, and you'll see that it is all too often only a superficial cover. Instead of there being a productive forest that will protect the immediate lands from erosion and the valleys below from excessive floods; instead of a forest that will produce merchantable trees in sufficient volume to supply needed forest products and urgently needed work for local settlers and communities, you will find that this superficial green cover is too often composed mainly of worthless snags, brush, and tree species of such low value that it will be easy to see why foresters call them "weed trees." Many of you already have developed this habit of critical observation, at least unconsciously, I am sure. When we all learn to observe critically what we are looking at, the demand for corrective action will become overwhelmingly strong.

My second suggestion will then be timely. Specifically, it is an appeal that you, through your Society, join with foresters and other conservationists in a new crusade to make the forest situation in the United States so well known, and its causes so well understood by the public, that it will no longer tolerate the destruction and waste that exist today.

The voice of your Society has already been lifted in this direction. In the National Historical Magazine this month, there is a story about your Pine Plantations. In that article, there is this statement: "The Penny Pines Project of the Golden



Jubilee will reach its fullest development only if your members and chapters encourage private owners of forest land to extend scientific methods of reforestation."

In that single statement, you have the gist of what I have tried to say here today. I am sure you will heed the injunction, and let your forestry interests and activities lead you into wider fields of forest conservation endeavor.

Such a crusade is urgently needed. The forest resource has been a tremendous factor in building America into the great Nation it is today. It can and should be an equally tremendous factor in a still greater Nation of the future. Abundant resources are a foundation stone of our Democracy; and by their wise use we can help to make and keep America strong.

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